

## ***City of Northampton Health Department Coronavirus Situation Awareness Report***

**PLEASE NOTE: This is a rapidly evolving situation. Risk of the Coronavirus to Massachusetts residents remains low. Infection numbers are likely to change. The City of Northampton Health Department will continue to provide updates and coordinate public messaging on the situation on a regular basis.**

**March 5, 2020; 3:00 pm**

### **Situation Report:**

Recently, a new strain of coronavirus - 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)—was detected in Wuhan, China. This novel coronavirus causes a respiratory (lung) infection. This new virus is related to, but different from, other coronaviruses that cause the common cold and diseases such as SARS and MERS. Common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, coughing, shortness of breath and in severe cases, pneumonia (fluid in the lungs). Cases range from very mild to severe, with up to 2% of cases currently ending in death.

As of March 5th, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports there are 112 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in 15 states and 11 confirmed deaths reported in the United States. Data include both confirmed and presumptive positive cases of COVID-19 reported to CDC or tested at CDC since January 21, 2020. This data does not include information on testing results of persons repatriated to the United States from Wuhan, China and Japan. States are now testing and publicly reporting their cases. In Massachusetts there has been one presumptive positive and one confirmed case of Covid-19. Both cases are connected with overseas travel. The CDC has reported that there is known person to person transmissions that has occurred in the United States, where there is no known travel history or contact with an infected person, indicating that community transmission is taking place.

City of Northampton officials, healthcare institutions and community stakeholders are coordinating planning efforts and preparing to respond in the event that COVID-19 escalates. As this is rapidly evolving, the Northampton Health Department will use every effort to update this report and guidance frequently.

### **How Best To Protect Yourself From Getting Coronavirus:**

Currently the risk of contracting the Coronavirus in Massachusetts remains low. Conversely, it is the season for respiratory illness, so the recommendations below on how best to protect yourself apply in both cases. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention is recommending personal preparedness and protective measures, including Personal Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions (NPIs). NPIs are measures taken to help prevent the spread of diseases that do not include medications. Currently, there are no medications or vaccinations available to prevent COVID-19, however, everyone should practice these respiratory illness prevention protocols:

- diligent hand washing with soap and water
- avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- cover your mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing
- stay home from school, work and other people when you become sick with respiratory symptoms like fever and a cough
- avoid close contact (within 6 feet) of people who are sick
- routine cleaning and disinfection of high touch areas with EPA approved disinfectants
- **stay informed** – <http://www.northamptonma.gov/245/Health>  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html>

## **A Couple Other Things to Consider to Protect Yourself from Illness**

- Increase the frequency of routine cleaning and disinfecting at home and your place of work. Especially consider those high touch areas such as; elevators buttons, door knobs, bathrooms, public facing counters
- Think about your excursions to shopping centers, restaurants, entertainment venues
  - Wipe of carts, seats and hard surface
  - Carry a 60% alcohol based hand sanitizer with you
- Think about packages that you receive from all over the world. Many use the internet to shop. Virus can live longer on certain surfaces, such as cardboard and plastic
- Consider limiting unnecessary travel

## **Notification of Illness:**

If you are experiencing or receive a call or notice from someone experiencing respiratory symptoms who has recently traveled to China and/or has had exposure or possible exposure to an individual with COVID-19, encourage them to call their medical provider or notify the ambulance or emergency department before they go to receive care of their symptoms. This will allow medical staff to arrange for a visit that does not put other patients or staff at risk of infection.

## **Emergency Dispensing Sites (EDSs):**

There is currently no treatment or prevention for COVID-19, and there is no expectation that population-wide prophylactic measures such as opening an Emergency Dispensing Site (EDS) to provide medication or vaccines to the public will occur in the near future. However, robust EDS plans exist for the City and will be used in the event that they become necessary. A vaccine is projected to take at least a year to develop, and anti-viral medications are still under review for effectiveness. Even if a vaccine becomes available, or anti-virals are found to be effective, at this time it is anticipated that this medical care will take place through your regular medical provider.

## **Isolation and Quarantine (I&Q):**

The Northampton Health Department may find themselves in the position of monitoring those in quarantine (individuals who may have been exposed to COVID-19, but who are not showing signs of illness) and potentially enforcing quarantine in partnership with the Department of Public Health. Generally, quarantines are for 14 days, since that is the longest incubation period seen with similar coronaviruses. In addition the Health Department may be involved in monitoring those who are ill with COVID-19 and who have been instructed to isolate themselves at home (i.e., those not needing hospitalization). Isolation periods will differ, depending on the length and severity of symptoms.

## **KEY POINTS:**

- The WHO reports there are approximately 96,713 confirmed cases and 3,303 deaths worldwide
- WHO has rated the global risk of COVID19 spread “very high”
- There are 112 confirmed U.S. cases of COVID19

Within the U.S. locations of detection include **Arizona** – 2, **California** – 36 (includes 1 fatality), **Florida** – 3, **Georgia** – 2, **Illinois** – 4, **Massachusetts** – 2, **New Hampshire** – 2, **New Jersey** – 1, **New York** – 13, **North Carolina** – 1, **Oregon** – 3, **Rhode Island** – 2, **Washington state** - 39 (includes 10 fatalities), **Wisconsin** – 1, **Texas** - 1

**With Questions, Please Contact Merridith O’Leary at 413-587-1214 or by email at [moleary@northamptonma.gov](mailto:moleary@northamptonma.gov)**

Further information can be found at the following links.

MDPH Information on COVID-19: <https://www.mass.gov/guides/information-on-the-outbreak-of-2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19>

CDC General Information Page on COVID-19: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

MDPH Printable Fact Sheets: <https://www.mass.gov/guides/information-on-the-outbreak-of-2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19#printable-fact-sheets>

CDC Cases in the US: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html>

*CDC Guidance for Medical Professionals:* <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/index.html>

CDC Information on Travel: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>

CDC Information for Businesses & Travelers: [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fguidance-business-response.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fguidance-business-response.html)